

**REMARKS**

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated April 9, 2004. Claim 1 has been amended. Claims 33-38 have been canceled. Claims 1, 3-11, 13-17, 25, 27-32, and 39 are now pending. Applicant reserves the right to pursue the original claims and other claims in this and other applications. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the above-referenced application in light of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

At the outset, Applicant acknowledges with appreciation that claims 11, 13-17, 25, 27-32, and 39 are in condition for allowance.

Claims 1, 3, and 9-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Chiang. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of independent claims 11 and 25. In particular, claim 1 now recites "conductive plug . . . formed of a single conductive material . . . a non-conductive layer having at least a first and a second etched via formed at least partially over said conductive plug, wherein said first etched via is wider in diameter than said conductive plug." (emphasis added).

Chiang's FIGS. 1-9 merely illustrate a single etched via 51 formed over the conductive plug. Chiang's FIGS. 1-9 do not illustrate a first and second etched via formed at least partially over the conductive plug formed of a single conductive material, wherein the first etched via is wider in diameter than the conductive plug.

Claims 3 and 9-10 depend from claim 1 and are similarly allowable along with independent claim 1 for at least the reasons provided above. Withdrawal of the § 102(b) rejection for claims 1, 3, 9 and 10 is respectfully solicited.

Claims 4, 7 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chiang. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 4, 7, and 8 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the reasons set forth above for allowance of claim 1. In particular, Chiang does not teach or suggest a semiconductor device with a conductive plug formed of a single conductive material having a first and second etched via. Withdrawal of the § 103(a) rejection is respectfully solicited.

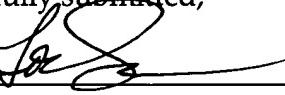
Claims 5 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chiang in view of Wang. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 5 and 6 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the reasons set forth above for allowance of claim 1. Specifically, Chiang does not teach or suggest a conductive plug formed of a single conductive material with a first and second etched via. Wang is relied upon for disclosing an etch-stop layer comprising silicon dioxide and adds nothing to rectify the deficiencies associated with Chiang. Withdrawal of the § 103(a) rejection is respectfully solicited.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

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Respectfully submitted,

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